2.20 WEST BENGAL

1979-80

2.20.1 Administration : The sanctioned strength of the State Archives consists of 18 permanent gazetted posts, 108 permanent non-gazetted posts, 4 temporary gazetted posts and 14 temporary non-gazetted posts.

2.20.2 Budget : During the year under report there was no separate budget provision for the State Archives of West Bengal in the non-plan sector. Expenditure on the non-plan items, i.e., expenditure on account of Establishment etc. was met from the total grant allocated to the Education Department as a whole. A sum of Rs.5,61,000/- was provided in the plan budget for the development of State Archives during the year under report.

2.20.3 Building : The State Archives has its own building at premises No.6, Bhowani Dutta Lane, Calcutta where the Historical Section is located. The Current Section of the Archives is located at Writers' Buildings along with the Secretariat of the State Government.

2.20.4 Record Management : As reported earlier, the work of appraisal of pre-1947 records was kept suspended in accordance with the directive of the Government of India, Ministry of Education.

2.20.5 Research and Reference : 199 research scholars from different universities, colleges and research institutions availed themselves of research facilities. 2,931 records were requisitioned by the research scholars and various Secretariat departments for administrative purposes from the current section and 10,892 from the Historical Section. 2 1 queries on

records from private agencies/individuals were attended to and 203 microfilm rolls were also used by the research scholars.

2.20.6 Reference Media : The work of preparation of the press Lists of the records of the Board of Commercial Trade from 1778 onwards was in progress and Descriptive Lists of 3,710 files of confidential records received from the Home (Political) Department were prepared.

2.20.7 Preservation of Records : 32,900 brittle and damaged pages of the proceedings volumes of different authorities were repaired with tissue paper, acetate foil and glassine papers. 212 proceedings volumes were rebound and 370 books including maps were fumigated. A bunch of old letters written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the great novelist, kept in the custody of Rishi Bankim Library and Museum, Naihati, West Bengal was repaired by the State Archives.

2.20.8 Photo-Duplication : The State Archives have a microfilm camera with its accessories. The posts of Microphotographer, Photo Assistant created for a separate microfilming unit were not filled up during the period under report. As a part of the regular programme, microfilming of records, kept in the custody of State Archives, with the help of an outside agency was continued. The proceedings volumes of the Political Department from 1834-52 and 1869-1900, Finance Department 1878 onwards and Municipal Department from 1880-1896 were microfilmed.

2.20.9 Library : During the year under review 36 books were acquired.

2.20.10 Other Activities : In order to arouse archival consciousness among the public an Archives Week was celebrated from 26th January, 1980 to 1st February 1980. The programme included (i) Exhibition of Historical Records entitled "Treasures of

West Bengal Archives"; (ii) Publication of Souvenir; (iii) Seminar on the use of West Bengal Archives for writing history of (a) "Agrarian and Social Condition of Bengal"; and (b) "Freedom Struggle in Bengal"; and (iv) "Open House".

The exhibition was inaugurated at the Calcutta Information Centre by Shri Sambhu Ghosh, Minister for Higher Education, West Bengal on 26th January, 1980. The exhibits covered a wide range of subjects viz. Early Revenue Administration, Current Prices, Salt Trade, Sati, Famine of 1770, Spread of Education, Urbanisation, Indigo Agitation, Freedom Movement etc.

The Seminar, held in two sessions at the lecture hall of the Asiatic Society on 28th January, 1980 was presided over by Professor J.N.Sarkar, formerly Head of the Department of History, Jadavpur University. Professor Benoy Bhusan Chaudhury, Calcutta University and Shri Gautam Bhadra, Lecturer in History, Calcutta University spoke on the history of Agrarian and Social condition, while Hitesh Ranjan Sanyal on the Freedom Struggle in Bengal.

In the "Open House" programme, observed on 27th and 31st January, 1980 at the State Archives Building various methods of repair of records, microfilming, management of records, original records etc. were shown to the visitors of different walks of life.

In the Souvenir the growth and development of the State Archives was dealt with.

Shri Sambhu Ghosh, Minister for Higher Education, West Bengal gave talks on the importance and problems of Archives on the All India Radio, Calcutta on 26th January 1980 and also on T.V. Calcutta on 25th January 1980.

The State Archives also participated in an exhibition (Siksha Pradarshani) organised at Chinsurah, District Hooghly, West Bengal from 29th March to 6th April 1980.

The State Archives also imparted training to two persons, deputed by the Calcutta High Court in the methods of repair and preservation of old and brittle records.